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Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-14
JUSE-00 NSAE-00 SNM-02 TRSE-00 USIA-15 NSC-05
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R 210725Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4386
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

UNCLAS BANGKOK 15965

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, TH, TU
SUBJ: SECRETARY-GENERAL OF NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION AND PREVENTION COMMITTEE RETURNS TO THAILAND FROM TURKEY

REF: BANGKOK 13491

1. SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION AND PREVENTION COMMITTEE, MR. PRAMUK SAWATDIMONGKHON, AND HIS THREE-MAN PARTY RETURNED TO THAILAND ON JULY 19 AFTER VISITING TURKEY FROM JULY 11-17. THEY WERE INVITED TO VISIT TURKEY AS GUESTS OF THE GOT FOR OBSERVATION OF OPIUM POPPY CULTIVATION IN THAT COUNTRY.

2. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE BANGKOK POST ON JULY 20, PRAMUK GAVE THE POST HIS IMPRESSIONS OF TURKISH OPIUM CULTIVATION. THE SUBSTANCE OF THE INTERVIEW WAS PUBLISHED IN THE JULY 21 EDITION OF THE POST. PRAMUK NOTED THAT OPIUM PRODUCTION IN TURKEY IS LEGAL AND UNDER STRICT GOVERNMENT CONTROL. HE SAID FARMERS IN ONLY SEVEN PROVINCES IN CENTRAL ANATOLIA WERE ALLOWED TO CULTIVATE OPIUM POPPIES, WITH EACH POPPY-GROWING FAMILY BEING PERMITED TO GROW THE PLANTS ON A
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PLOT OF LAND LIMITED TO 500 SQUARE METERS. OPIUM POPPY CULTIVATION IN TURKEY IS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE SOIL PRODUCTS OFFICE OF THE FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY MINISTRY, PRAMUK CONTINUED. IN EACH DISTRICT OF THE SEVEN PROVINCES INVOLVED, THERE IS A DIRECTOR AND CONTROLLER OF POPPY GROWING. AFTER THE OPIUM PODS APPEAR, PRAMUK SAID, OFFICIALS

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WILL COUNT THE NUMBER OF PODS PER SQUARE METER IN ORDER TO ESTIMATE THE ANNUAL OPIUM CROP, AND THUS DETERMINE THE AMOUNT OF OPIUM WHICH THE FARMERS MUST SELL TO THE GOVERNMENT.

3. PRAMUK EXPLAINED THAT GOT DID NOT REPEAT NOT HAVE MUCH DIFFICULTY IN CONTROLLING OPIUM PRODUCTION BECAUSE CENTRAL ANATOLIA IS A PLAIN WHICH IS ACCESSIBLE BY ROAD, MAKING IT RELATIVELY EASY FOR OFFICIALS TO INSPECT THE POPPY FIELDS. HE ADDED THAT IN THAILAND RTG SURVEILLANCE OF POPPY CULTIVATION WAS DIFFICULT BECAUSE THE PLANT IS GROWN IN THE REMOTE AND IN-ACCESSIBLE MOUNTAINOUS REGIONS. "HOWEVER, WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S CROP REPLACEMENT PROJECTS, WE HOPE THAT OPIUM GROWING BY HILLTRIBES WILL GRADUALLY DISAPPEAR BECAUSE CASH CROPS OTHER THAN OPIUM ARE BEING INTRODUCED TO HILLSTRIBESMEN," PRAMUK CONCLUDED.

4. EMBOFF WILL BE MEETING WITH A MEMBER OF PRAMUK'S DELEGATION NEXT WEEK AND WILL REPORT FURTHER ON THE PARTY'S IMPRESSIONS BY SEPTEL.
WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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